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ABSTRACT

This report describes a process for improving the transition of special needs students from their special education setting to that of the regular education classroom in their neighborhood elementary schools. Analysis suggested that parents, administrators, and receiving teachers were apprehensive about the move to total inclusion for special needs children and that current methods of implementing the transitional process were inadequate. Four major strategies were developed to facilitate the transition process: (1) videotaping of individual special needs students and related staff; (2) systematic visitations and meetings involving everyone in the inclusionary process; (3) development of consistent methods of documentation; and (4) staff development. Results suggested that the symptoms of the original problem were not significantly reduced by implementation of the strategies. Acceptance of students with physical disabilities requiring no content modifications in the regular classroom was better than for those students requiring an individual curriculum. Results support the need for a clear philosophy statement about inclusion, more time for staff development, and more uniformity in the delivery system. Teachers' attitudes appeared to be the greatest factor in the success of the inclusive process. Appendices include administrator, teacher, and parent questionnaires; sample letters and forms; and teacher responses. Contains 29 references. (Author/DB)

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IMPROVING THE TRANSITION OF SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS TO A SETTING IN THEIR HOME SCHOOL

by

Pamela S. Laughlin

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master's of Arts in Education

Saint Xavier University - IRI
Field-Based Master's Program

Action Research Final Report
Site: Rockford, Illinois
Submitted: April 26, 1994

Itinerant Teacher

Rockford, Illinois

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Abstract

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TITLE: Improving the Transition of Special Needs Students to a Setting in Their Home School.

ABSTRACT: This report describes a process for improving the transition of special needs students from their special education setting to that of the regular education classroom in their neighborhood schools in the second largest city of a midwestern state. The problem was originally noted by teaching staff who expressed concern about being unqualified to teach these students and resentment for the added responsibilities expected of them in the classroom and by the administrators of receiving schools who articulated that they had not been given enough time and information to adequately prepare for these students. Administration of surveys and questionnaires confirmed the problem and identified many areas of concern.

Analysis of the probable cause data divulged that parents, administrators and receiving teachers were apprehensive about the move to total inclusion for special needs children and that the current methods of implementing this transitional process were inadequate. The analysis also showed that the amount of apprehension was not in proportion to the degree of the handicapping condition.

Solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the implementation of four major strategies for the inclusion process: video taping of individual special needs students and related staff, systematic visitations and meetings involving everyone in the inclusionary process, the development of consistent methods of documentation and staff development.

Symptoms of the original problem were not significantly reduced. Acceptance of students with physical disabilities requiring no content modifications were more well received in the regular classroom than those requiring an individual curriculum. Results indicate the need for a clear philosophy statement about inclusion, more time for staff development and more uniformity in the delivery system for this researcher's school district. Teachers' attitudes appear to be the greatest factor in the success of the inclusive process.

Chapter 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

General Statement of Problem

The current implementation of inclusion for students with special needs in this researcher's school district is inadequate as evidenced by teacher feedback, interviews and questionnaires.

Immediate Problem Context

There were 539 students in the school originally housing the students on this researcher's caseload. (class list) This school is located in the southeastern quadrant of the city. The school shows, as does the state, an increase in the minority population with 82.6 percent of the students being white, 14.7 percent Black, 1.9 percent Hispanic and 0.9 percent Asian or Pacific Islander. Seventeen point three percent of the school's population is represented by special needs students. Students qualifying as low income comprise 21.5 percent of the total enrollment and those with limited English proficiency comprise 0.7 percent.

Thirty-seven percent of the students from the "regular education" population of this school are bused from various

areas of the city. Ninety-seven percent of the special needs students are bused from the surrounding community.

This elementary school is actually two schools built adjacent to one another and joined by a walk way and ramp. The original school was built as a kindergarten through sixth grade elementary facility in 1952. The adjacent building was constructed in 1968 and housed only special education students. In 1987, these buildings merged and now function as one elementary school with a shared name.

The original structure has three wings. The south wing has two kindergarten classrooms, three third grade classrooms, an art room, a computer lab and a library. The north wing has a resource/speech and language room for intermediate physically disabled students, two fifth grade classrooms, a fifth/sixth grade classroom, two sixth grade classrooms and a self contained classroom for the mentally impaired. The east wing has a large gymnasium with a stage, offices for the physical education teachers, storage area for art supplies, teachers' lounge, three fourth grade classrooms, one self-contained classroom for the learning disabled, one self-contained classroom for the mentally impaired and offices for an association which monitors special needs children throughout the northern part of the state line area. The administrative offices for this elementary complex are located in the center of this building.

The newer building is considered to be the primary wing.

There are three separate pods on the eastern side of the building. Each pod has four classrooms, two rest rooms, and an office space in the center. The classrooms are spacious with two adjoining rooms attached to each. Each room has two doors. Those on the interior section have one door leading to the main hallway and those on the exterior section have doors leading to the playground. All rooms in the pod have doors leading to a common area which leads to the main hallway of the building.

Pod I contains three second grade classrooms and one self-contained classroom for the learning disabled. The inner office space is occupied by two specialists who serve those children who are hearing impaired. Pod II houses two first grade classrooms, and two self contained classrooms for the mentally impaired. The inner office of that pod serves as an office for two teachers who share one of the classrooms for the mentally impaired. Pod III was occupied by a computer lab, two first grades and a combination resource/self-contained classroom which serves physically disabled students. The inner office served as headquarters for two itinerant case managers for the physically disabled.

This researcher's classroom was located in the exterior section of Pod III, was arranged to accommodate cooking, art, computer, music, play and reading centers. Three large rectangular tables were in the center of the room. One of the connecting rooms was used to house the teacher's desk and

materials and the other was used as a treatment area for children requiring medical and hygiene assistance. Each classroom in this wing is equipped with magnetic walls, a sink, carpeting, a large mirror and an intercom system.

A pool is placed in the center of this building which is used primarily by physically disabled students for therapeutic reasons. A large therapy room is also located in the central portion of this facility. Two physical therapists, two speech and language therapists, one vision consultant and an occupational therapist work out of this room.

There is a gymnasium to the south of the pool. It also functions as a lunch room for the primary grades. The remaining portion of the facility houses an art room, living center, complete with refrigerator and stove and an Evaluation Clinic. The Evaluation Clinic is not staffed by school personnel. The Evaluation Clinic serves students throughout the school district who need testing in addition to that which is offered by their individual schools.

This elementary school is administered by a principal, an attendance secretary, an administrative secretary and a head teacher who takes responsibility when the principal is absent. There are 30 classroom teachers, 28 teachers' assistants, one full-time nurse, two speech clinicians, one vision specialist, two hearing impaired specialists, a learning disabilities resource teacher, two physical therapists, one occupational therapist, a social worker and a school psychologist on staff.

There are two art teachers, two physical education teachers, one adaptive physical education teacher, and one music teacher to serve the students in both buildings. Children have art for 45 minutes twice a week, music for 30 minutes once or twice a week and physical education for 30 minutes twice a week. Students with physical and developmental impairments have swimming for 150 minutes per week. A Special Services Team meets every Wednesday to evaluate those students who have an existing special education eligibility or who have been referred by a classroom teacher because of social or academic reasons.

The school has an active Parent Teacher Organization. This organization allots fifty dollars per classroom per year for materials and expenditures, organizes an annual Fun Fair, and has raised money to build a playground which is wheelchair accessible. The parents and teachers worked to establish the following mission statement for the school. "This school exists to provide our diverse student population with an accepting and challenging atmosphere in which all children can achieve their fullest potential, socially and academically, through a partnership of students, parents, staff and community."

The students on this researcher's caseload are currently served in seven different buildings. The self-contained and resource programs for students with physical disabilities are no longer based at their original site. The children in these

programs are being served in regular education classrooms in their neighborhood schools or in programs accommodating their educational needs which are closest to their home schools. This researcher is now referred to as an itinerant teacher and serves students in seven different schools in two quadrants of the school district.

An elementary school in the northwest quadrant of this city is designated as the base school for this researcher , who serves as case manager for children with physical disabilities. Total enrollment for this school is 407 students. This school shows an increase in the minority population and meets the district's goal of a 30 percent minority ratio. Twelve percent of the total population is represented by children with special needs. Thirty-two point nine percent of the students qualify as low income. Those with limited English proficiency comprise 1.2 percent. Five children with physical disabilities attend this school and are on this researcher's case load. One child is in a self-contained setting for the learning disabled. Two children having "physically handicapped" as their primary eligibility are totally included in second grade. One sixth grader with "physically handicapped" as her primary eligibility is totally included in sixth grade. A kindergartner with handicapping conditions listing in order of mentally impaired, speech and language and physically handicapped is included in the morning session with her regular education peers. This is the first

year this school has served as an inclusionary setting for special needs youngsters.

This school has a central wing, an east wing and a large gymnasium on the western wing of the building. Offices for the principal, nurse and secretary are located at the main entrance of the building. Two fourth grade classrooms two fifth grade classrooms and two self-contained classrooms for learning disabled students are located in the east wing. This wing also has a classroom which is used by the PTO, physical and occupational therapists.

The central wing houses one kindergarten, two first, second and third grade classrooms, two primary self-contained learning disabled classrooms, offices for a speech and language therapist, psychologist, itinerant teacher for physically disabled, resource teacher for learning disabled, kitchen, teachers' lounge and a small office which is shard by the social worker and various itinerant teachers who serve the building.

The Chapter I teacher is based in the basement of the school as is the library. The playground, library and Chapter I room are not wheelchair accessible. The main entrance to the school is wheelchair accessible. The rest are not.

As do all of the other schools in this district, this school has a special services team which evaluates students with existing special education elegibilities and reviews those students who have been referred by parent or teachers

for possible future support services. This team, led by the building principal, meets on Wednesday mornings and also serves as the inclusion tack force for this building, led by the building principal.

This building is administered by a principal, a secretary and a part-time nurse. A head teacher assumes the leadership role when the principal is absent. One secretary handles clerical work for the school with the assistance of two volunteers. Full-time staff includes seventeen classroom teachers, five paraprofessionals, one physical education teacher, one art teacher, one music teacher, a resource teacher, one secretary, a principal and two custodians. The nurse, Chapter I teacher and kindergarten paraprofessional are in the building on a part time basis. The teacher for physically disable, social worker, speech pathologist, vision teacher, social worker, psychologist and adaptive physical education teacher are in the building on an itinerant basis.

The following is an accounting of the remainder of the students on this researcher's caseload. One physically disabled student is included in a third grade classroom in a northwestern elementary school, two children are in second and sixth grade classrooms in a northeastern elementary school, one home-schooled student receives services at a northeastern elementary school near his home, two children are served in a private Montessori program and one student is in a private pre-school housed in a church. The average mileage traveled

by this researcher in covering the caseload in a given month is 130 miles.

The Surrounding Community

This study was administered in the second largest city of a midwestern state. Located 75 miles from a large metropolitan center, the city covers a fifty square mile area. The 1990 census shows the population of the city to be 139,426. Of the population, 13.4 percent are below poverty level. The city is a manufacturing community with a per capita income of $14,109.00. There are high employment concentrations in machining, metal working and transportation equipment industries. Additional sources of employment include services, retail trade, government and wholesale trade. Data on adults twenty-five years of age and over shows that 74.8 percent have completed high school or higher and 18.17 percent have earned a bachelor's degree or higher. The census figures also show that 77.9 percent of the population is White, 14.4 percent is Black, 4.0 percent is Hispanic, 1.5 percent is Asian or Pacific Islander, 0.2 percent is Native American and 2.0 percent is comprised of other races.

The school district is composed of 39 elementary schools, four middle schools and four high schools. The total enrollment of the district is 28,045 students. The racial and ethnic background of the student population as of September 30, 1992 is as follows: White, 68.1 percent; Black, 23.4

percent; Hispanic, 5.8 percent; Asian or Pacific Islander, 2.5 percent, and Native American, 0.3 percent. The ethnic background of the district's 1,718 teachers is as follows: White, 92.7 percent; Black, 5.0 percent; Hispanic 1.2 percent; Asian, 0.9 percent; and Native American, 0.3 percent.

The school district has a history of financial difficulties. In 1978 arts, sports and extra curricular activities were eliminated in the schools because of the failure of a tax referendum to support those programs. Insufficient revenue is a continual threat to this school district.

During May of 1989, a lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court against the school district. The lawsuit charges the district with long term discrimination against minority students. An interim agreement is currently being implemented in the school district. The court order calls for three magnet elementary schools. Two are currently in operation and the third is to open in 1993. The magnet schools draw white students to predominantly minority areas. Minority students have the opportunity to attend schools in predominantly white areas through voluntary transfers. During the 1992-93 school year, 27.9 percent of the elementary students attended a school outside of their attendance area. All high schools and middle schools are integrated for the 1992-93 school year. Twenty-seven of the 39 elementary

schools are integrated under the district's voluntary transfer program. The interim court order provides monies to implement inservice training and materials for the targeted schools. The school district is also undertaking a change from basic school organization to one of site-based management. The plan calls for each school to develop a mission statement, complete long-range goals and develop specific action plans to carry out the goals.

The current superintendent of schools recently resigned. A firm was hired to conduct a national search for a new superintendent. The position has now been filled by a black male from a city in a neighboring state which has experienced similar problems with race relations.

The community is becoming more involved in shaping the educational goals of the district. A parent center is in operation. An ad hoc committed is being led be a group of eight local businessmen to offer solutions, ideas and expertise in the growth, healing and success of the school district.

A task force has been formed to address the concept of inclusion in this city. The purpose of this group is to develop a philosophical statement about inclusion for the district and to develop local procedures to implement inclusive strategies effectively. Parents, community agencies, district administrators, special and regular educators and the teacher's union are involved in this task

educators and the teacher's union are involved in this task force.

Regional and National Context of Problem

The Illinois State Board of Education defines the concept of inclusion as "the placement of students with disabilities in regular classrooms with supplemental aides and services to meet their need." Testimony presented by this researcher's school district acknowledges that this is a very controversial and emotional topic. Neither the federal or state regulatory agencies actually use the term inclusion in their definitions. They do make it clear that all students should be educated in the "Least Restrictive Environment" or "LRE".

In 1975, Congress enacted the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. It was then referred to as P.L. 94-142. Later, in 1990, it was amended as the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA.

Under this Act, any state receiving federal funds must provide students with disabilities a free and appropriate education in the LRE. It is the responsibility of each public agency to guarantee that each student's educational placement is reviewed and evaluated annually with reference to the student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP). The education of each student should take place as closely as possible to his or her home.

Procedures must be in place to assure that, to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are

classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs "only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily" (Winners All, 1992).

If the student is unable to be served in the regular educational setting, then various alternative placements which are included in the federal rules should be made available to successfully implement the IEP for each child. When considering the LRE, attention should be given to any possible harmful or negative effects which might be imposed on the child and to the quality and availability of necessary services. The intent of the IDEA is that all students with disabilities must be served. Under this act, schools are required to offer opportunities for non-disabled students to interact with peers who are in separate facilities and residential settings, to the extent deemed appropriate.

President Clinton vowed to promote the inclusion of all people with disabilities into society. He currently has disability groups advising him. Eight-six advocacy groups called the Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) have urged the Clinton administration to ensure legislation promoting and encouraging inclusive education. CCD is requesting that President Clinton assure major funding increases for special education programs under IDEA. They

also have made clear their desire to have key positions in the Education Department filled with people who have a vision toward inclusion (Ill. State Bd. of Education).

The current reforms in education emphasize the importance of creating a more complete educational setting for all students. There is therefore, a movement toward a holistic philosophy in education in which all children are taught under one system (Pearman, Huang, Barnhart and Mellblom, 1992). Historically, special needs students have been served in separate, parallel programs within the educational system (Pearman, 1992). Will (1986) believes that this delivery system is less effective, too categorical and is generated on the assumption that students with handicapping conditions cannot learn in the regular classroom setting. It is believed by some (Wang, Reynolds, & Walberg 1896) that this more inclusive approach would improve the integration and services for all children, creating a stronger educational system.

Wang, et.al. (1987) agreed that changes in current practices would have to be implemented to accommodate needed staff development, teacher preparation at the college level, modification of funding models, changes in assessment practices and elimination of categorization of students. Changes must also occur in the existing belief system now held by our special educators. Since the passage of P.L. 94-142, these professionals often convey that they are the experts who can best carry out programming and most effectively meet the

special needs of these children. (Pearman, Huang, Barnhart and Mellblom, 1992)

Opponents of inclusion contend that educators are not ready to work co-operatively together to develop and deliver programming for special education students and that the specialized techniques of direct instruction and other like programs have more beneficial results in a specific or self-contained setting. (Anderson & Fuchs, 1988) (Hallahan, Keller, McKinnery, Lloyd & Bryan, 1988). These opponents also point out that some regular educators are reluctant or unwilling to accept inclusion students into their classrooms. School districts, although giving directives to implement inclusion, are frequently not adequately prepared for this implementation (Pearman, Huang, Barnhart and Mellblom, 1992).

Regular classroom teachers do not perceive themselves as being qualified to adequately adapt instruction for students with special needs (Gartner & Lypsky, 1987; Reynolds et.al. 1987; Stainback & Stainback, 1985). Although proponents of inclusion feel that good teaching practices cover the needs of all students and eliminates the need for separate systems in education, the majority of classroom teachers feel that regular class programs are inappropriate for addressing the instructional needs of students with disabilities. Coates (1989) warns that simply shifting the responsibility from special pull-out programs to itinerant consultants without adequate support for those who are being asked to implement

the changes might be counter-productive. He states that service providers generally tend to resist change when roles and functions are altered.

Teacher expectations and attitudes highly influence the success or failure of programs. If teacher perceptions and expectations of the disabled students' abilities are negative, placing such students in those teachers' classrooms will not have positive results. Teachers will not actively pursue solutions to pupil problems if they do not assume ownership of them (Gerber & Semmel, 1984).

Opponents of the Regular Education Initiative (REI) and inclusion see the potential for the special education being treated like an aide or tutor, rather than a team teacher of equal status in the regular education classroom. Often, the special educator in the regular education classroom moves a group of children to a section of the classroom to offer special assistance. The children requiring this help are then segregated in front of their classmates, who witness their difficulty in understanding through modified material. (Byrnes, 1990)

Byrnes (1990) contends that any change in the current delivery system of special education must emerge from the active collaboration of parents, teachers and specialists. Byrnes also contends that districts are not ready to meet the federal and state requirements for education of the handicapped through the implementation of inclusion. More

dialogue needs to occur. A greater foundation of participation needs to be established. Operational issues must be resolved by awareness of alternative methods for successful implementation.

Kauffman, et.al. (1988) cautions that regular education teachers have not had enough input on the REI, which basically represents the philosophy of inclusion:

> Strangly absent from the models of teaching that are implicitly assumed by most REI proponents is a realistic model of the cognitive operations of persons who actually teach. Our concern therefore, is that enough respect be shown for regular classroom teachers, to ask them what they perceive, based on teaching practice, is feasible, desirable, and in the best interest of students.

Singer (1988) and Kaufman (1989) have observed that teachers and other key participants have not been considered in the inclusive implementation of REI. Coates (1989) reports findings from a teacher survey in Iowa that teachers support special education pull-out programs and overwhelmingly oppose inclusion.

The National Education Association states in its report, The Integration of Students with Special Needs Into Regular Classrooms: Policies and Practices that Work (May, 1992) that, "National, state and local policies must encourage and provide for the implementation and maintenance of quality programs to ensure successful integration of students with special needs into regular classrooms." This report emphasizes the importance of adequate preparation and sufficient support for classroom teachers through carefully

sufficient support for classroom teachers through carefully planned collaboration with related service implementors. All students should benefit from REI. Programs must provide high quality training for staff, have the support of building and administrative staff, receive full funding and function in unity among all participants.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM EVIDENCE AND PROBABLE CAUSE

Problem Background

This country has made great strides in educating children with disabilities. Before the landmark 1975 legislation, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142), most students with disabilities were either excluded from public schools or educated in segregated settings within the system. The programs for severely disabled individuals were often in separate facilities and functioned more as custodial institutions rather that educational ones (Winners All, 1992). Compulsory attendance laws in the early 1900s were passed, but many children with disabilities continued to be excluded from schools. Sigmond (1983) noted, that, "...almost all children who were wheelchair-bound, not toilet trained, or considered ineducable were excluded because of the problems that schooling them would entail."(p. 3) For those who were allowed to attend the schools, exclusion from regular classes was made possible by the establishment of special classes. Feelings against placing special needs children in regular education classes were strong. Special classes were formed not for humanitarian reasons, but because such children were unwanted in other settings.

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act guarantees that all children regardless of their disabilities, are

entitled to a free and appropriate education. This act changed the future and opened many doors for millions of children (Winners All, 1992). Housing programs for special needs children in regular education did not change the thinking of many educators. Teachers in regular education classrooms thought of special educators as those with specialized training and having a unique capacity for their work (Stainback, 1989). This type of reasoning led to separate systems in education. Programs were housed under the same roof, but functioned under different guidelines. They developed on parallel, rather than converging lines (Stainback, 1989).

Even though special classes began to evolve in the early 1900s, the dominant means of educating children with disabilities at that time was through asylums and residential institutions. In the mid-1950s and 1960s, special classes in public schools became the most common educational delivery system for most students with disabilities. Residential institutions and special schools remained for educating students who were blind, deaf and otherwise physically handicapped. Students who were considered severely or profoundly handicapped were frequently still denied educational services of any type. These individuals usually lived in wards of large state institutions.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the educational needs of disabled students experienced considerable growth in support

and resources. The federal government funded legislation supporting increased education for students who were considered low income, disadvantaged or disabled. Parent groups, such as The National Association for Retarded Citizens, were organized to initiate quality educational and leisure programming for these children. The National Cooperative Educational Research Program of 1957 was established which gave funding and attention to the study of children who were labeled mentally retarded. This program also financed the course of study necessary to prepare teachers for students with handicaps. Funds through this program were also made available to pass the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) (Stainback, 1989).

Educational leaders began to raise an awareness of the rights of students with disabilities to learn in more normalized school settings with other children. Burton Blatt (1969), Lloyd Dunn (1968), Gunnar Dybwad (1964), Isaac Goldberg (1958), Nichloas Hobbs (1966), Stephen Lilly (1970), Maynard Reynolds (1962) and Wolf Wolfensberger (1972) were among these leaders who questioned the appropriateness of segregated settings, institutions and special schools for educating students with special needs. (Stainback, 1989)

Brown v. the Board of Education (1054) and its progeny eventually led to the 1970's court decisions in Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia which established the right of all children labeled mentally retarded to a free and

appropriate education, making exclusion from the public school systems more difficult. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, guaranteed the rights of persons with handicaps in employment and in educational facilities which receive federal dollars. This movement subsequently led to the passage of P.L. 142, supra., which was enacted in 1978. That law states that no child, regardless of disability, can be denied an appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. By 1976, all states had passed laws subsidizing school districts which provided programming for students with disabilities. Many national associations for regular educators passed resolutions in support of mainstreaming. Teachers in many states were required to take courses to prepare them for mainstreamed students. Educators in 1979 such as Norris Haring, Lou Brown, Wayne Sailor, Doug Guess and William and Diane Bricker recommended and supported efforts advocating for the education of students with special needs in regular neighborhood public schools.

By the late 1970s and the early 1980s, the integration of students with mild to severe disabilities into regular education settings started to take place to varying degrees. Those children who had historically not been served in public schools, began to receive educational services in regular neighborhood schools with integration at non-academic times (Biklen, 1985; Certo et.al., 1984; Knoblock, 1982; Lushause, 1988: Stainback & Stainback, 1985).

The REI was issued in 1986 by the United States Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services in the U.S. Department of Education. The purpose of this initiative was to find ways to serve mildly and moderately disabled students in the regular education classrooms through collaboration between regular and special educator (Reynolds & Birch, 1988).

A push to extend programming for all special needs children in the regular education setting originated in the mid to late 1980s. To accomplish this, an effort was made to consolidate special and regular education systems (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). The experimentation of integrating severe and profoundly disabled students into regular classrooms was begun on full or part time basis at this time (Bilkin, 1988). A resolution calling for the education of students with severe and profound handicaps in regular education was adopted in 1988 by The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps.

Reynolds & Birch (1982) recognized attempts to slow this trend toward including all students. Attempts to reverse inclusion are evident. Although there are government mandates involving least restrictive environment, some school districts have shown no progress in this area and have in fact increased restrictive, segregated placements (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). There are still some scholars and researchers who argue against the benefits of inclusion (Braaten, Kauffman, Braaten, Polsgrove and Nelson, 1988).

The National Education Association (1992) recognizes that

the proper implementation of services for students with special needs in the regular education setting elevates the quality of educational programming for students. This organization also recognized that the lack of accountability by participants, inconsistent procedural practices and inadequate staff development have led to improper programming, causing a negative impact on the classroom.

Records documenting the educational history of programs for special needs children in this researcher's school district were reportedly lost during a move the of Regional Office of Education from one facility to another and therefore were unavailable to this researcher. Historical background of programming for special needs students in this school district was obtained during an interview with the Director of Student Service. (Appendix A) Before 1965, mildly handicapped (Learning Disabled and Behavior Disabled) students were placed in regular education classrooms. Severely and profoundly handicapped children were served in privately and state funded facilities.

After the 1965 federal law requiring specific delivery of services, children with severe physical disabilities, including those afflicted with polio were educated in a large segregated school on the eastern side of the city. Schools for the neurologically, visually and hearing impaired were housed in churches, but funded by the government. Programs for the trainable mentally handicapped (TMH) were eventually

added to the school serving the physically disabled.

When this large school closed a new segregated facility, with a heated pool to accommodate physically and mentally impaired students, was built in the southeastern quadrant of the city. Another segregated facility with a pool was built on the northwestern quadrant of the city. This school was built when public schools began teaching profoundly disabled students, who originally had been housed in privately funded facilities.

In 1969, services for students labeled as learning disabled or behavior disordered were rendered by resource teachers in regular education settings. These teachers received a stipend of $300.00.

Self-contained classrooms for students having severe learning disabilities and/or severe behavior disabilities were later formed. Many classrooms for children with mental impairments were also formed in public schools.

Mainstreaming of children with learning and behavior difficulties took place after the mandates contained in P.L. 92-142 in 1978. Participation was usually limited to art, music, physical education, lunch, recess and other social times.

As of October, 1993, 1414 students are receiving services in self-contained placements. Two thousand one hundred and fifty-nine students receive special education in resource settings. Special education resource figures include those

students who have moved to regular education classrooms from self-contained settings.

Thirty-eight students moved from self-contained classrooms to regular education classrooms in the 1993-94 school year. These students are representative of all areas of special education. This school district continues to house several self-contained classrooms and a segregated facility for students with severe handicapping conditions.

In 1989, students on the researcher's caseload were serviced in a self-contained classroom labeled "Physically Handicapped." Children in this class ranged in ages from five to nine years, had various handicapping conditions ranging from mild to severe, were at differing academic levels and were bused from various locations throughout the school district. These students were completely segregated. They had their own art, music and physical education classes and ate lunch at a separate table in the lunchroom. They did not go outside for recess with the other children. There were two teachers for the physically disabled, one primary and one intermediate. These teachers operated under the immediate supervision of the building principal and department supervisor. The department supervisor made visits to the classrooms once or twice a week. Equipment and educational materials were funded through the department. All services for the children were rendered by specialists who were housed in the facility. The students were removed from the classroom

to receive services such as physical therapy, speech and language, vision, counseling, etc.

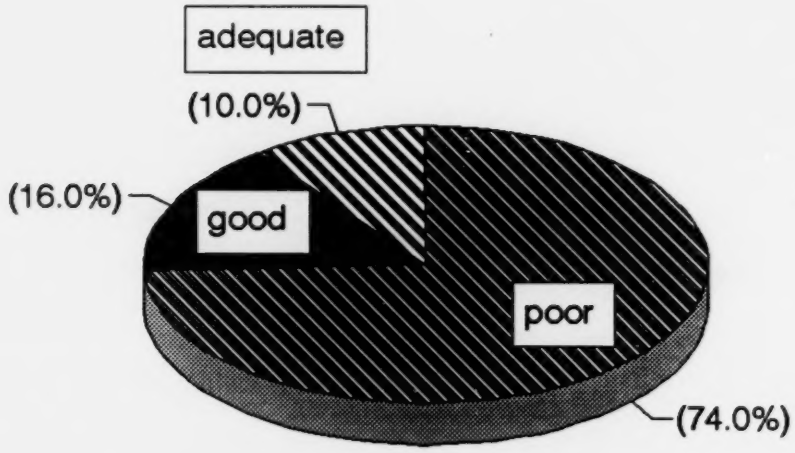
In 1990, this case manager arranged to have those students with physical disabilities join their age appropriate peers for art and music with the assistance of their paraprofessionals. Two five year old students were placed in the morning kindergarten classroom with regular education students. This case manager continued to have the students from the "Physically Disabled" program join regular education classes for art and music, and arranged to have those students who were cognitively able, join regular education students for academic subjects. By 1991, all students who were of kindergarten age were put into regular classrooms for the entire morning session. Three children were placed in one classroom with a paraprofessional and two were placed in the other kindergarten classroom with a paraprofessional. Their kindergarten classrooms were located in close proximity to the self-contained classroom, so collaboration between the teachers took place daily. These children were placed in the self-contained setting for the afternoon. One boy remained in first grade for the entire day. Students needing academic support were then pulled from the regular education classes by this educator on a resource basis. Classmates having similar educational needs were also pulled for special programming.

Problem Evidence

Subjective and objective means were used to assess this districts implementation of the inclusion of students with physical disabilities in their home schools. Surveys (Figures 1 and 2 following this page and Appendix B) were given to teachers in three elementary schools served by this researcher. These were used as a measure to assess the perceptions of teachers regarding the current procedures used by this district for inclusion. Interviews were held with parents, paraprofessionals, teachers and administrators to document reactions concerning the various aspects of inclusion: assessment, preparation, delivery of services, communication, staff development, funding, etc.

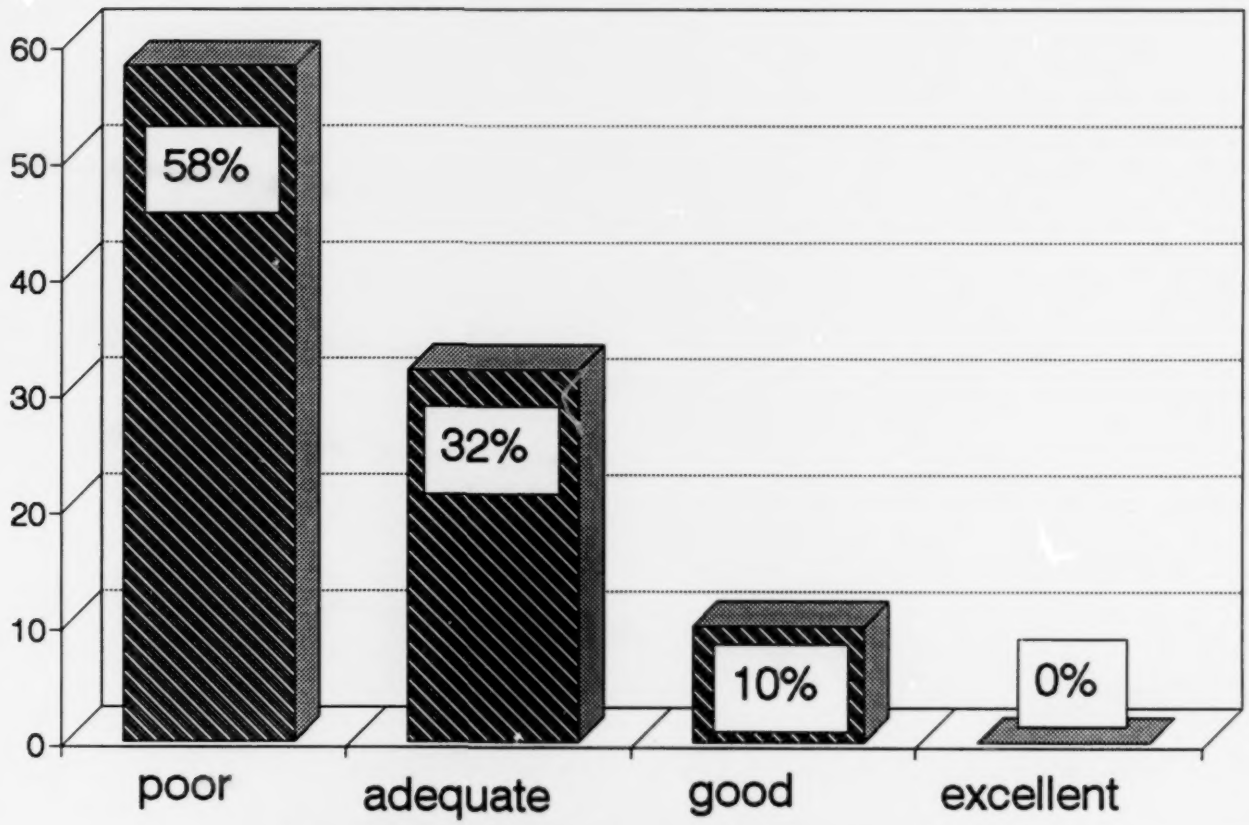
Logs and anecdotal records documenting training sessions, telephone calls, classroom observations, team teaching activities, team meetings, parent contacts and collaborative planning sessions were kept by this researcher. Detailed records were kept logging distributions of materials and equipment. Records were also kept logging daily mileage traveled by the case manager while serving seven elementary schools.

Historical data regarding the educational practices for children with special needs in this county was collected and through a review of the literature compared to state and local practices. Two interviews were held with this district's Director of Student Services to obtain information about the



Teachers' reactions to the question,
"How would you rate this district's preparation
for inclusion students?"
(from responses to Appendix B, September, 1993)

Figure 1



Teacher's ratings for current forms of assessment of students with special needs (from responses to Appendix B, September, 1993)

Figure 2

education of special education students.

Monthly department meetings were attended by this researcher to share successful practices for delivering services. Current legal practices and procedures were reviewed at these meetings. Solution strategies discussed by students, parents and professionally in conjunction with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the implementation of portfolios, videos, school visits and inservices to decrease anxieties of parents and teachers and improve the level of assessment of the targeted students. All strategic solutions were designed to more thoroughly and accurately assess the targeted students and increase the level of understanding for receiving teachers during the transitional process.

Many symptoms of the original problem were minimized: parents anxieties were lessened, acceptance of targeted students improved, teachers' knowledge of target students increased and the total process of inclusion improved.

Probable Cause of the Problem

The survey responses received from educators in three four buildings served by this researcher revealed that 42% of the teachers reported having had inclusion students and 21% said that they currently have inclusion students. Those responses and interviews with educatiors and parents established:

1) No significant differences in results in relationship to school, job position or years of experience.

2) Seventy-four percent of the teachers feel that they are not adequately prepared for the inclusion student. (Fig. 1)

3) Fifty-eight percent of the teachers rated the current forms of assessment of students with special needs as being poor. (Fig.2)

4) Inclusion is being implemented on the theory of site based management, but the policy as adopted by the district requires district wide consistency.

5) Parents do not feel appropriately involved.

6) Job descriptions for the various professionals involved in inclusion are unclear.

7) There has been a delay in implementing training of educators and staff when their job requirements have been substantially changed.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Review of the Literature

Analysis of the probable cause date suggested several reasons related to the ambiguity and controversy surrounding inclusion. A review of the literature supported the findings that teachers feel unprepared to include students with special needs into their classrooms, teachers feel overwhelmed by the unclear expectations of the district regarding inclusion, professionals feel stressed by the assumption that inservices and training sessions be attended at their leisure times, parents and teachers feel that they have no control over mandated policies, professionals express concern for the student's self-esteem, teachers are reluctant to have paraprofessionals and other adults in their classrooms, prospective teachers report inadequate preparation for inclusion by higher institutions of learning, parents have unrealistic expectations of educators and teachers generally do not have positive attitudes regarding inclusion.

Review of these probable cause data suggested that a series of questions related to teacher attitudes about inclusion, guidelines for preparation, implementation of related services, assessment, curriculum adaption and staff development should be addressed.

The questions related to teacher attitudes included:

1) What can be done to create a more accepting environment for inclusion students?

2) How can teachers be motivated to take ownership of the inclusion students?

3) How should the district inform teachers that acceptance of the inclusion student is not optional?

4) What incentives can be offered to teachers and administrators to make inclusion more inviting?

Questions regarding adequate preparation were closely related to effective means of assessment and included:

1) How can participants in the inclusive process be best informed about the needs and abilities of the prospective students?

2) What forms of documentation and authentic assessment can be used to represent the inclusion student?

3) How can universities be guided to provide relevant information about children with special needs in the inclusive process to educators seeking certification?

The implementation of related services and staff development questions were addressed as follows:

1) How can professionals effectively work together in a collaborative method?

2) Who should monitor delivery of services within the classroom?

3) How should professionals be held accountable for their delivery of service and support for those involved in the inclusion process?

4) How can parents and students be involved in staff development and planning?

5) How can administrators, educators, parents and professionals learn to value each other as equal partners in the inclusion process?

Curriculum adaption issues were covered by the following questions:

1) Should classroom teachers be responsible for curriculum adaption?

2) Is it appropriate to expect paraprofessionals to make instantaneous adaption or should the case manager view lesson plans prior to implementation?

3) When should the case

manager/itinerant teacher demonstrate or consult with the classroom teacher and paraprofessional concerning curriculum adaption?

4) How important is it that all material and instruction be adapted?

The literature search was influenced by the probable cause data. The literature confirmed that all too often, when inclusion is planned and implemented in schools, building administrators and teachers are ignored in the process. The literature suggests that to heighten the level of acceptance of inclusion students by building staff, organizers must ensure that all affected parties be participants in the planning and implementation of strategies for programming. (Pearman, et.al., 1992) If building level staff are omitted from the inclusion process and are uninformed, they often become confused, anxious and hostile.

Changes in laws and policies regarding the education and programming for children with special needs have brought about an increase in the integration of these students into schools, regular classrooms and communities. Although many believe that the exposure of disabled students to non-disabled students leads to more favorable reactions and acceptance of one another, research indicates that contact in and of itself is not enough. These contacts are more favorable when the participants have equal status (Gottlieb, 1990). Attitudes

about disabled students can be improved if interactions are carefully planned and facilitated by a knowledgeable source so that information is readily available and anxieties are easily addressed. Reactions to individual disabled students is related more to the behavior and competence of the person rather than by the knowledge of the disability (Yuker, 1988). Voeltz, 1980 confirms this finding as he states that the willingness of regular students and teachers to interact with disabled children increased after carefully designed contacts were arranged. The reaction by regular education teachers and students varies with the nature and severity of the disability, prior contact with disabled students and specific training in the field (Yuker, 1988).

Unfavorable attitudes toward integrated children or even toward the process of integration itself are often felt by regular education teachers. Baker and Gottlieb (1980) found that often teachers who are initially positive became frustrated and negative after their experiences with mainstreaming and inclusion. These researchers found in their review of the literature that :

> Important components of a teacher's attitude about integration and inclusion are: (1) their knowledge of the child's academic and social behavious, (2) their deelilngs about their own competence to teach these childred, (3) their expectations in receiving assistance in teaching these children from supportive services, (4) their beliefs concerning the advantgages and disadvantages of different educational placements for special needs students and (5) their

attitudes toward other teaching related matters. (p. 11)

Johnson and Johnson (1984) have found that teaching with cooperative learning groups fosters more positive interactions between students with and without disabilities as competition is not as intense. Voeltz (1980) concurs that these types of controlled and structured contacts increased the regular student's willingness to interact with disabled students.

Negative reactions to the disabled are reported to be more influenced by the behavior and level of abilities in the students rather than the teacher's knowledge of the disability. Attitudes can be improved about the inclusion student if programmers are careful to monitor activities and emphasize activities which minimize stereotypes and anxieties while giving all participants equal status (Guskin & Gottlieb, 1990).

Educations must see the benefits of heterogeneous grouping which reinforces programming for all students. This cooperative approach to education will demand a new belief system by practitioners who historically have supported a philosophy that segregates students who have unique learning styles. Serving these students in an inclusive setting requires extensive communication and collaboration among all levels of educators (Pearman et.al., 1988).

School districts striving toward a unidimensional system need to contact universities and voice the need for more training of all educators in understanding the skills

necessary to function in this setting. Future educators need more opportunities to work and observe in classrooms prior to graduation or certification. This will require general and special education departments at the university level to join forces to implement the training and retraining of educators (Pearman, et.al. 1988.)

This researcher's State Board of Education recognizes that attitudes and expectations are most important in a smooth inclusive delivery system for students with special needs. The Board sees a need for a public relations and marketing campaign on inclusive education. The Board also acknowledges that methods are needed to more adequately share information about these students, monitor forms of assessments, promote staff development, provide incentives and alter current strategies for funding. The Board has vowed to adopt a clear position statement regarding the service delivery for inclusion students in this state's educational system (Illinois State Board of Education, 1993).

Project Outcome

The first terminal objective of this problem is related to the concerns about preparation presented in Chapter 2, which were revealed through teacher interaction and verified by means of questionnaires and surveys. These data indicate that teachers feel very unprepared for inclusion students and

have not been adequately informed about the process. Probable cause data presented previously in this document and solution strategies presented thereafter suggest the need for more collaboration among parents, professionals administrators and teachers. Teachers indicated that they need more time to receive direction and planning when dealing with the student with special needs in the regular education setting. The need to develop more adequate classroom teacher support, open lines of communication, unification of a delivery system of related services and total class commitment was evident. Therefore:

> As a result of weekly planned collaborative meetings, staff development seminars and team teaching strategies implemented during the 1993-94 school year, the level of preparedness for teachers and specialists servicing inclusion students will improve as measured by surveys and questionnaires which will abe administered in the fall of 1993 and again in the spring of 1994.

Probable causes gathered from the literature suggested a need to develop authentic forms of assessment for students with special needs which would establish a more thorough understanding of their needs and abilities. Concerns were also brought forth recognizing the need for more easily obtainable information about these students and strategies to improve teacher attitudes regarding inclusion. Therefore, the second terminal objective is :

As a result of visual and printed documentation gathered during the 1993-94 school year, assessments of students with special needs will be more complete, functional and available to the professionals serving these children.

In order to accomplish the terminal objectives, the following process objectives defined the major strategies proposed for the problem resolutions:

1) As a result of video taping students with special needs as they work and interact with parents, teachers, paraprofessionals and related service staff throughout the 1993-94 school year, assessment measures will be more thorough, teachers will be more prepared and related service staff contributions will be effective.

2) As a result of the addition of a specifically marked inclusion section in the special education folder, access to pertinent date regarding the student's needs within the educational setting will be more attainable.

3) As a result of the presence of another certified teacher in the classroom sharing instructional responsibilities through team teaching, all students will receive more instructional time and both teachers will be more prepared to address the needs of all of the children within the classroom setting.

4) As a result of inservice training, all staff involved in the inclusion process will feel more prepared and qualified to serve the student with special needs.

5) As a result of collaboration and team meetings arranged by the itinerant teacher and building principals, time will be given to discuss the progress of inclusion, anxieties will lessen and cooperation will develop.

6) As a result of clearly stated practices and procedures regarding inclusion within each building, ambiguity will diminish and parity among staff members will be established.

7) As a result of additional planning times for classroom teachers, increased collaboration and cooperation between special and regular educators will take place.

Proposal Solution Components

Solution strategies for improving the acceptance and implementation of inclusion fell into two categories: teacher preparation and student assessment. These strategies were reflective of the terminal objectives in that they provided systematic procedures for the documentation and implementation of inclusion, scheduled times and places for collaboration, additional planning time and opportunities for staff development. All of these elements were designed to improve the general attitude prevailing in this researcher's school district regarding the topic of inclusion.

Chapter 4

ACTION PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Description of Problem Resolution Activities

The action plan is designed to address three major components: preparation of those involved in the inclusive environment, staff development, assessment strategies to evaluate the inclusion student and evaluative strategies to monitor the clarity and effectiveness of the inclusion process.

The preparation of those receiving and providing services for the students with special needs was begun in the spring of 1993 by the supervisors of special education programs or building principals who were servicing the children at that time. When this was not possible, preparation began at the earliest feasible date and was initiated by the supervisors of specific special education programs. Using needs assessment data collected from the previous school year, and parent input, the staff designed a plan to inform receiving team members of disabling conditions, educational goals, curricular adaption, related services and assessment modifications for each student with disabling conditions. The special service team became involved in inservicing the entire school on inclusion students.

The staff development phase of the implementation plan began prior to the 1993 fall term. Seminars and workshops were held and attended by volunteer participants prior to the

school year and continued throughout the school year. The purposes of these sessions were to: increase the understanding of the inclusion process, to improve the awareness of curricular adaption, to enhance the ability of participants to function collaboratively and to promote problem solving strategies within the regular classroom setting.

The improvements sought in assessment strategies include: alternative testing documentation, modifications in curricular expectations, incorporation of video assessments, addition of an inclusion packet in the student's folder and the systematic sharing of information by related staff through regular meetings.

The implementation plan is presented in outline form. Overlapping may occur as result of placement variations and varying enrollment dates for individual students and initiation of placements for each student.

1. Prepare for the transition of the student with special needs to their home school or school closest to their home offering the most appropriate educational programming by arranging an exchange of visits by classroom teachers.

    A. Who: Building principals initiated the series of visits between schools.

    B. What: Staff were able to meet

students, observe classroom strategies and ask questions about programming and background information regarding the students.

C. When: Meetings were held in the spring, prior to the fall placement.

D. Where: Meetings were in the principals office and then moved to the child's classroom for observation.

E. How: Professionals were given release time during the school day. Substitutes covered their class.

F. Why: Team members and classroom teachers became more comfortable with and cognizant of the student's needs and capabilities.

2. Arranged student and parent visits to the new placement setting.

A. Who: Building principals or program supervisors arranged these meetings.

B. What: This process introduced students and parents to the new staff and school setting.

C. When: Visits were arranged in March, April and May of 1993 or whenever possible according to the arrival and start date for each student.

D. Where: Visits were in the child's home school with age appropriate peers.

E. How: Parents accompanied the child and transportation was arranged when necessary.

F. Why: This reduced anxieties among all involved and allowed for more informed decision making.

3. Participation in workshops and seminars regarding inclusion and collaboration strategies in education.

A. Who: Teachers, paraprofessionals and any willing participant in the inclusion process were involved.

B. What: Programs described and educated participants about current expectations and practices regarding inclusion.

C. When: Seminars began in the summer

of 1993 and continued through the school year.

D. Where: Workshops and seminars were held locally and statewide.

E. How: Seminars were arranged by local educators, parent groups, state funded organizations and were funded through district monies and program grants. Substitutes were provided for classroom teachers when sessions were held during the school day.

F. Why: Provided enlightenment, encouragement and strategies for teachers, administrators, parents and other related service personnel.

4. Administered a questionnaire/survey to educators in the fall of 1993.

A. Who: The case manager for the students with special needs.

B. What: The questionnaire/surveyconsisted of ten questions with a rating scale of one to four and an open ended question regarding

inclusion.

C. When: In the fall of 1993

D. Where: The questionnaire/surveys were distributed during regular staff meetings or at individual meetings between the case manager and the classroom teacher.

E. How: Educators rated their reactions to the general idea of inclusion and expressed their opinions about the district's implementation of inclusion.

F. Specific areas of concerns, needs and staff development necessary for the successful implementation of inclusion were identified.

5. Arranged inservices at inclusion cites.

A. Who: These were arranged by building principals, itinerant teachers (case managers), representatives of state funded agencies and parents.

B. What: Meetings were arranged with clearly defined agendas.

C. When: Meetings were scheduled before or after school as close to the arrival of the inclusion student as possible.

D. Where: Meetings were held in the school setting, usually in the staff lounge.

E. How: Teachers were invited to listen and participate in planned presentations by knowledgeable others.

F. Why: The purpose of these meetings was to clearly define the laws and expectations regarding inclusion and to offer the expertise of knowledgeable others regarding this process.

6. Create a new section of the child's special education folder labeled "inclusion".

A. Who: The student's case manager would work with the classroom teacher and other staff to include important

documentation.

B. What: This section would contain specific transitional planning, documentation of observations, authentic assessment suggestions, records of successful curriculum adaption, records of parent goals and concerns, Individualized Education Plans, building accessibility needs, evacuation plans and video assessments.

C. When: This should be implemented as soon as the child enters the district. For this action plan, it was begun in the fall of 1993.

D. Where: This information was kept in the central office of the child's school.

E. Why: This process helped to reduce the time spent gathering important information about the student and remediated the

duplication of strategies, providing a more solid foundation for future programming.

7. Produce job descriptions and clarify expected implementation of services.
   A. Who: This was provided by district supervisors, gathered by department supervisors and facilitated by building principals or designated team member.
   B. What: Written job descriptions were given to building staff.
   C. When: In the future roles should be clearly defined by the onset of the school year.
   D. Where: Bound copies, containing the job descriptions of all members of the inclusion team, should be available in each building and be easily accessible to all staff.
   E. Why: This was initiated to

prevent overlapping of services, inappropriate implementation of services and to facilitate easy access to the appropriate individuals when programming for the inclusion students.

8. Create a video folio for each inclusion student.

   A. Who: The case manager or any team member having the skills to provide a good video representation of the inclusion child.

   B. What: Video documentation including demonstrations, interviews, instructions and special adaption and accessibility concerns for the inclusion student were completed.

   C. When: Video assessments and documentations were begun in the fall and should be recorded throughout the school year with parental consent.

D. Where: Videos were taken during all activities in the school day. Videos also were recommended for interviews with family members at school and during family functions.

E. Why: These were done to more accurately assess the inclusion student and more successfully prepare professionals working with the student.

9. Provide literature describing the student's handicapping condition and educational as well as programming needs.

A. Who: The case manager assigned to the inclusion student did these searches.

B. What: Literature or other information which provides information about the student were studied.

C. How: Materials were hand delivered to staff members or mailed to them through district mail.

D. When: Distribution of literature and review of the contents was accomplished by the case manager at the beginning of the school year, or when necessary.

E. Why: Review of the literature offered a foundation for a more effective delivery model for the inclusion students and affected parties.

10. Provide training sessions for proper positioning and handling of physically disabled students.

A. Who: The case manager presented these sessions or arranged for the appropriate staff members to do so.

B. What: Methodical and informational training sessions were arranged when necessary for staff dealing with students with physically handicapping or specific educational needs.

C. How: These sessions were

administered through demonstrations and open dialogue.

D. When: Training and information sessions were arranged at specifically designated times or as needed throughout the school day.

F. Why: Training was provided to offer more appropriate and functional delivery of service, and to reduce the possibility of anxiety and/or injuries to students and staff members.

Methods of Assessment

A variety of methods were used to assess the effects of the interventions used to ease the process of inclusion by this researcher. Questionnaire/surveys were administered to educators in the fall of 1993 and compared to questionnaire/surveys administered in March of 1994.

Daily logs were kept by this researcher documenting the reactions of staff, parents and students to the inclusion process. Records were kept regarding equipment needs and availability. These anecdotal records also reflected the

accountability and implementation of services rendered by related service personnel listed on the student's IEP.

Frequent telephone and personal interviews were held between the case manager and significant members of the inclusion team. Parents met with this researcher on a regular basis to share joys and concerns regarding their children.

Team members for each child met formally on a weekly basis to evaluate the students' progress. Routing sheets were sent around prior to thee meetings to that each member could document needs and questions that he or she wished to have addressed.

Chapter 5

EVALUATION OF RESULTS AND PROCESSES

Implementation History

The terminal objectives of the interventions addressed the concerns about the preparation for the inclusion process, specifically time for adequate collaboration among parents and professionals and greater documentation and availability of information pertinent to programming for the inclusion student. Surveys, interviews and observations indicated that the current procedures for including children with special needs into classes in their home schools in this researcher's school district lacked classroom teacher support and open lines of communication. A unilateral commitment for implementation containing clear guidelines and a successful system for assessment and delivery of service was needed. Therefore, the terminal objectives stated:

> "As a result of weekly planned collaborative meetings, staff development seminars and team teaching strategies implemented during the 1993-94 school year, the level of preparedness for teachers and specialists servicing inclusion students will improve as measured by surveys and questionnaires which will be administered in the fall of 1995 and again in the spring of 1994.
>
> As a result of visual and printed documentation gathered during the 1993-94 school year, assessments of students with special needs will be more complete, functional and available to the professionals serving these children."

Planning for the transition of children with physical disabilities from more restrictive settings to classrooms in

their home schools began in February of 1993.

Letters informing parents of the opportunity to send their children with physically handicapping conditions were sent to twenty-five families from whose children were assigned to this researcher's original school. This letter described current trends in education and invited parents and students to discuss the idea and then contact this researcher. The letter clearly stated that current levels of service would continue and the move at that point would be voluntary. (Appendix C)

Telephone interviews and informal meetings were held between parents and this researcher. At this point, most parents were very hesitant to consider making a move. They expressed fears that the quality of programming would diminish. Many were very anxious about leaving the original school setting because it offered an adaptive swimming program in a heated pool. All of the families were willing to explore the possibility of a move.

The supervisor of the program for students with physically handicapping conditions called the principals of the neighborhood (home) schools, informed them that this researcher would be contacting them to set up an introductory meeting. After finding a time which was convenient for the parents, this researcher set up an introductory meeting with the neighborhood school. This researcher then informed the

principal and the team of the present school of the date of the initial meeting. Information was sent to the neighborhood school using district Form A (Appendix D) which identifies needs and team members involving the targeted student. The neighborhood school then invited key members of the present school's team via a "notice of confirmation" form (Appendix E) to their school. The principal of that school invited prospective classroom teachers for these inclusion students to that meeting.

At the introductory meeting this researcher/case manager described the students and reviewed the information on the aforementioned Form A which detailed the student's strengths and weaknesses. These meetings were led by the home school principal. Parents were encouraged to share information, concerns and questions regarding programming for their child. (Form C, Appendix F)

This researcher then checked the buildings to see if there were any accessibility issues as many of the students coming to the neighborhood school were non-ambulatory.

The staff members from both schools agreed that the three students from the original school setting would be successfully included in their neighborhood school. The parents were still hesitant. Each voiced a concern that programming would suffer if a move was made to a new facility.

Principals at the neighborhood schools identified prospective teachers for the following year.

Visits were arranged by this case manager. Designated teachers for the following year were invited to observe these physically handicapped students in their current setting. Interviews were held between school staff members. The paraprofessional discussed and demonstrated her role in programming and adapting the environment and materials for these students.

Follow up visits were then arranged at the neighborhood schools, transportation was provided and parents were invited. The students spent an entire school day at their neighborhood school. Paraprofessionals went with the student when this arrangement was possible. In cases where a paraprofessional was responsible for two children, a substitute paraprofessional was hired to cover the remaining student or the parent attended to the needs of the visiting child for that day.

These day long visits proved to be useful. Parents and students were received warmly. New questions and concerns arose. Other questions and concerns were answered. Follow-up meetings were scheduled between staff members from both schools, parents and students when possible. Further information regarding family life and the vision for the students' future were explored by this case manager, documented and later shared with school personnel.

After the decision was made to transition to the neighborhood school, and IEP (Individualized Education Plan)

meeting was planned. This meeting was arranged by this case manager and held at the original school. All key team members at both schools, related service personnel, administrators and parents were invited. Arrangements had been made to cover the responsibilities of the classroom teachers for these meetings.

The availability of the heated pool at the original site was the only service that could not be provided to inclusion students. Parents were encouraged to explore outside options for this service. Alternative programs at the local YMCA, YWCA, Park District and private swim clubs were addressed.

With the disbanding of the self-contained programs for physically disabled students, parents were given the choice of having their children included in regular classrooms at the original site or moved to inclusive settings in their neighborhood schools. Of the twenty-five students, five remained at the original site with a new case manager; one moved out of the district; two, after their three year re-evaluations, were placed in self-contained programs for the learning disabled and the remaining transitioned to neighborhood schools.

Transition plans for each student with physically handicapping conditions on this researcher's case load were completed. These plans accompanies those students remaining at the original site as well as those moving to a neighborhood school or program best suiting his or her educational needs. All files were completed, organized in chronological order and

turned into the supervisor of the program for physically handicapped students at the end of the school year. These files were reviewed and then redistributed in the fall of the 1993-94 school year. Complete files of students on this researcher's case load were then kept in an office for this researcher at the aforementioned base school.

It was hoped that paraprofessionals would remain with their assigned students to provide continuity to the process of inclusion. Only four chose to do that. Three of the students assigned to this researcher were to begin the school year with new paraprofessionals. These paraprofessionals were hired during the summer by the department supervisor. This case manager was not present at the interviews. One of the newly assigned paraprofessionals had previously worked with children in the program.

One of the returning assistants did not show up for work on the first day of school, leaving two students with physical disabilities without special assistance. This created a dilemma in that the administrator of that school did not know the district procedure for calling in substitute paraprofessionals. These students therefore became the responsibility of the classroom teachers. These students had been placed midsummer by the program supervisor, so preparatory meetings and visitations had not taken place. These students were new to that particular building.

This researcher devoted the first morning of the school

year at the base school training the new paraprofessional and collaborating with classroom teachers when time permitted. One of the second grade students did not come to school on the first day. Upon calling the residence, this case manager was informed that this child had undergone major surgery earlier that month and would not be coming to school for at least two more weeks. The district had not been informed.

This was not the only change. The teacher who was to receive one of the second grade inclusion students decided to retire. The administrator then put both second grade inclusion students in the classroom of the teacher who had been hired to work at said school one week prior to the convening of the school year. Therefore, the second grade teacher remaining who had participated in the preparatory activities to receive one of the second grade inclusion students had no inclusion student. The new staff member, who had not participated in the training, was then assigned both inclusion students.

The student assigned to the kindergarten classroom at the base school was new to this researcher. Placement had been decided prior to assignment to this case manager. This child's physically and academic needs were significant. She carried the eligilibities of mentally impaired, speech/language and physically handicapped. Her functional age was about 12 months. Confusion surrounded her placement, her academic adaptions, the mother's vision for her future and

who was actually the child's case manager. The teacher, although experienced, had never taught kindergarten before. This researcher was given the job of training the paraprofessional, problem solving with the mother and making physically and curricular adaptions on the first day of class.

It was clear that the researcher could not meet the needs of all on the caseload on the first day of school. This researcher prioritized demands and called the seven schools assigned. Each school was informed as to when visits would be made to support students and staff. The entire first week was then devoted to assessing needs in each building, training staff, meeting with administrators and delivering equipment for functional and academic needs.

Five students with physically handicapping conditions were assigned to this researcher's base school, which allowed more time for implementing the terminal objectives. Therefore, this school setting will be the subject of implementation strategies.

The eligibilities of the kindergarten student qualified her to receive program services from an organization called Project Choices. Project Choices was organized in 1988 and provides training and advocacy strategies for professionals and parents of students with moderately severe and/or multiple disabilities. This organization is funded by the State of Illinois and in turn provides funding for staff development to schools that serve as inclusive settings for targeted

students. Coordinating collaborative meetings with two representatives from this organization became one aspect of the preparation component of the implementation strategy.

Several on site visits were made by these representatives to the classroom setting. Their observations were made of the inclusive strategies being used for the inclusion student and suggestions were then documented and sent to this researcher. Copies of these documents were then made by this researcher and shared with the staff involved. Meetings reviewing these observations were usually held with classroom teachers during their planning times. Meetings with other related staff members were arranged by this case manager on an as needed basis or were addressed at the Friday morning meetings.

Beginning in the summer of 1993 and extending through March of 1994 several staff members were sent to inservices and seminars regarding collaboration and inclusion. Topics of these inservices ranged from the overall philosophy of inclusion to actual practices and adaptions that work to more successfully implement inclusive strategies. Most of these seminars were held during regular school hours. Substitutes were provided. Project Choice's funds paid for the cost of these staff development activities. Mileage was also paid for those participating in out of district inservices and seminars. Attendance was voluntary, but most teachers of inclusion students at the base site attended at least one seminar. One after school planning session was held after

school for five hours and was attended by 80 per cent of the staff.

Project Choice's funds were used to pay an hourly rate for attendance.

The planning and implementation of weekly collaborative meetings at this researcher's base school began in September of 1993. Classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, related service staff and parents participated in these meetings. Fellow teachers and paraprofessionals assumed the responsibilities of the classroom teacher for the duration of the meeting. These meetings were organized by the building principal. Participants in these meetings recommended that programming for each student be reviewed weekly. Because there were five students to be discussed, the building principal organized these meetings on a revolving basis. A specific child was the subject of the collaborative meetings every fifth week. These meetings were chaired by the principal. The participants were given thirty minutes collectively to address questions, suggestions and concerns. The principal assigned responsibilities to team members. Notes were kept by this researcher on forms suggested by this school district. (Appendix G) Because of time constraints, those gathered were often asked by the building principal to resolve issues after the completion of the meetings.

Additional planning times for special and regular educators to collaborate were set up by the building

principal. These times did not correspond, however, with the times the special educator was in the building so times were arranged between these professionals according on an as-needed basis.

Team teaching by this special educator and the classroom teachers served to be a very effective model for successful inclusion practices. This in class delivery model benefitted all students. Responsibilities were shared and both educators were allowed to become familiarized with each student. The presence of the special educator also allowed the paraprofessional to take a break, as per contract, without disrupting the level of support in the classroom. This daily in class-service delivery model also kept the lines of communication open between students, parents, paraprofessionals, related service staff, regular educators and special educators. Although there specifically to serve children with physically handicapping conditions, this researcher was able to share in the instructional delivery for students with learning disabled and behavioral disorder eligibilities as well.

Initial surveys were distributed to special educators, regular educators and paraprofessionals at three schools housing inclusion students in September, 1993. The purpose of the survey was explained to participants at building staff meetings. Surveys were placed in staff mailboxes with a cover letter. Folders were left in the office of each school in

which completed surveys were to be returned. Respondents were not asked to identify themselves. Demographic information about the respondents regarding age, gender, years of experience, special or regular educator was included in the survey. This survey was created to gather and measure information regarding attitudes, perceptions, beliefs and interventions associated with inclusion. Four responses were possible for each item, ranging from 1 being negative to 4 being positive. Surveys were collected over a period of two weeks. Of the 102 surveys distributed, 63 were returned. Three had to be eliminated because of missing data.

Inservices were arranged by this case manager in the classroom setting. Students with handicapping conditions, parents and related service staff joined forces to develop a presentation explaining the disabling conditions, therapy and adaptions necessary for daily functioning in the curricular, home and social settings.

It was this researcher's intent to have these inservices in each classroom housing students with physically handicapping conditions. Only 25 per cent of the families gave permission to have these inservices. Children with higher cognitive functioning were more willing to talk about their disability. Children who were medically fragile or held a diagnosis of a progressive disease did not want to share the details of their prognosis with their classmates.

Informational meetings were organized by this researcher

with parents, paraprofessionals and related service staff for students throughout the year. These were productive, but seemed most effective in situations where the whole class seemed to have a basic understanding of the handicapping conditions and were participants in the solution strategies.

The second grade teacher who had two children with physically handicapping conditions on her class list devised a helper of the week program in her classroom. These children would gather materials for the disabled student, carry hot lunches in the cafeteria, hold text books during reading assignments, etc. If, for some reason, the designated child preferred not to be a helper for a certain activity, he or she simply chose a replacement helper. This system, although not a planned intervention, had remarkable results.

To make programming more possible for students, it became evident that a clearly marked inclusion folder needed to accompany each child. The school office seemed to be the most appropriate place to house these folders, but this researcher later decided that having the teacher keep this information in the classroom was more effective.

Crucial components were gathered for this inclusion packet. Alternative methods of testing historical data, documentation of past teacher observations, previous curricular adaptions, names and numbers of related service personnel, parent assessment information and literature relating to the disabling condition were included in this

packet.

Another phase of adequate transitioning of inclusion students required the cooperation of the building administrator, parents, students, paraprofessionals, related service staff, special and regular educators. Gathering professionals at one meeting was often impossible given the number of students being served throughout the school district by this researcher. The use of video taping seemed a viable way to disseminate pertinent information regarding specific students. This researcher purchased a video camera. Some degree of practice and instruction was required before feeling adept at recording informational sets.

Parental consent was a prerequisite for this activity. Documentation of this kind required active participation by all. Initially this was an uncomfortable activity in that the adults and children felt nervous about being in front of the camera. The newness wore off, a more methodical atmosphere prevailed and this form of assessment and demonstration was well received. The visual documentation coupled with the written documentation proved to add more depth to the understanding of the inclusion student and served as a valuable foundation for future programming, training and delivery of service.

Developing clear job descriptions and clarifying role expectations for professional staff was a difficult undertaking for this researcher. Job descriptions seemed to

be subjective and varied in interpretation. Some professionals not only found their jobs to be ambiguous in nature, but also were unable to determine who were their supervisors. Building administrators were in a state of confusion as to what the role differences were between the itinerant teacher, occupational therapist, physical therapists and adaptive physical education teacher. Written descriptions were not made available to this researcher. This case manager met with supervisors to express concern that this ambiguity hinders communication, delays and/or duplicates delivery of service and detracts from the continuity in programming for inclusion students. It was noted that without clear job descriptions and supervisors there was no constructive method of ensuring appropriate implementation of services was taking place. On a broader issue, this also made contractual requirements more vague. Building administrators were unclear as to who was responsible for evaluating professionals and overseeing caseloads. The overall chain of command seemed to vary from building to building.

Presentation and Analysis of Project Results

As a means of assessing the effects of the planned interventions, surveys were issued to school personnel at three elementary schools. These surveys addressed reactions to various facts of the inclusion process. During the school year the proposed interventions were implemented at one of

these schools. The data revealed that responses to pre and post surveys changed minimally, indicating a need for further intervention. No significant differences in responses were noted between the school receiving interventions and those that did not.

Results from pre and post surveys, polls, interviews and this researcher's observations indicated that the majority of those surveyed simply did not feel that inclusion is appropriate. This general adverse reaction was not influenced by specialty, age, gender, seniority or formal education. Both surveys also divulged that educators are much more in favor of the inclusion of physically handicapped students in the regular education setting than mentally impaired students. It appeared that the more capable the student was at mastering grade level objectives, the greater the acceptance by educators. Respondents to interviews and surveys clearly agreed that they were willing to make physical accommodations, but were opposed to making academic or behavioral accommodations.

During the course of this study it became evident that the problem was not that the district had not developed an adequate plan for inclusion, but that those responsible for executing that plan were not adept in doing so, were not willing to co-operate or were not given the support to do so efficiently. Building professionals seemed to work as independent entities, disregarding state and federal

regulations and often being out of compliance with the law. Further documentation became necessary. A poll taken by this researcher of itinerant teachers working with disabled students in various buildings identified problems ranging from meetings being called by building administrators without notifying key personnel, to teachers planning field trips thinking that they had the option of leaving students requiring special transportational needs out of the activity and specialists pulling students out of class rather than working collaboratively with the classroom teacher. (Appendix H)

Pre and post surveys, polls and interviews showed that the interventions had no significant impact on the respondents reactions to inclusion. Post surveys showed that respondents felt more strongly that mentally impaired students were inappropriate in the regular education classroom. Surveys also revealed that educators feel very strongly that this school district does not prepare adequately for, or support effectively the process of inclusion. Results indicate that teachers were less likely to adapt materials or spend individual time with inclusion students than they were at the time of the initial survey.

Responses to the last portion of the survey which stated "Please write down the first thought that comes to your mind about inclusion" revealed a negative reaction to inclusion. The results of this subjective portion of the survey are

reflected in Appendix I.

A critical component of the intervention strategies was training for school personnel in collaborative teaching. Unfortunately, only one inservice was planned district wide to guide school personnel in this method of education. The majority of those attending were special educators. Two speech and language therapists attended, as did one building principal. The rest were elementary teachers. Attendance was voluntary. The inservice was held during regular school hours with substitutes provided by the district. It appeared that those in attendance were those who were already committed to successful inclusion. Those who had been vocal about their opposition to the philosophy of inclusion were not in attendance. A critical segment of the staff had not been reached, making collaboration much more difficult.

Teacher's concerns which were noted during interviews included: loss of class time when students were pulled out by therapists and specialists, disruptions by adults who enter and exit the classroom, a child's lack of ability to master grade level skills, inadequate skills in teaching children with special needs, insufficient time for planning and a general feeling of being overwhelmed by the increased demands being put upon them.

Reflections and Conclusions

The interventions were the beginning to a much needed

unified delivery system for inclusion. Inclusion in this school district and across the nation is a new trend in educating students with special needs. To make it a truly successful approach, administrators and supervisors must commit to presenting and supporting a clearly defined system of education.

The data indicate that further work needs to be done on devising clear job descriptions. This researcher suggested that this be done at the district level with clear specifications of performance expectations and concise methods of evaluation. In conjunction with this undertaking, this researcher/case manager would recommend issuing flow charts identifying key personnel involved with each student to ensure that the chain of command is clear for resolving and addressing issues affiliated with said student. It is this researcher's belief that building administrators need to make themselves aware of the proper procedures in special educational issues. In order to protect confidentiality and professional integrity, respect must be given to the role of each professional involved in the student's programming. Collaboration is essential in the successful implementation of any kink of change. Observations by this researcher made it clear that more training needs to be given to encourage cooperation and communication among all participants of the inclusionary process. Educators have historically worked in isolation. Support and adequate time must be given to make

the requested change in the delivery system and teaching strategies for our schools. It is imperative that each member be included in the process if they are expected to be part of the solution.

The success of these interventions seemed to be most influenced by teacher attitude. Those teachers who sought information, welcomed team teaching opportunities, celebrated accomplishments with enthusiasm and showed a genuine interest in all children created an atmosphere conducive to meeting the needs of every child.

Team teaching proved to be the most rewarding and successful intervention in the inclusive process. The most effective system for this researcher was when the regular educator served as the content area specialist and the special educator assisted all students in developing good learning strategies. Both areas of expertise complimented each other. Problem solving took place cooperatively and spontaneously. Teacher/student ratios were reduced, students' problems were dealt with immediately and the teachers involved had immediate feed back on the effectiveness of the lesson.

There were several constraining factors in promoting successful practices. Only a minority of teachers and professionals expressed a belief in inclusion. Most interpreted this philosophy as another mandate by an already fragmented and disillusioned school system. Teachers expressed a loss of control and resentment for being forced to

teach children whom they did not feel qualified to teach. Given this information, it became evident that these teachers would provide a place for students with special needs in their classrooms, but they would not extend themselves to these students. That was perceived as someone else's job. This resistance to students with special needs in the regular education setting clouded the potential for successful interventions. The mere presence of the child seemed to reinforce the initial negative feelings about the appropriateness of the placement.

Chapter 6

DECISIONS OF THE FUTURE

The Solution Strategy

Continued efforts should be made not only to improve the transitional process for children with special needs who are moving from a segregated placement to one in a regular education classroom in their home school, but to empower all who are involved with the vision, the reinforcements and knowledge to make that transition a success. The district must provide clarity as to what system is expected beyond this transitional process. Time and incentives must be built into the programming for inclusion students so that collaboration among all participants is possible.

Procedures for transitioning students from segregated programs to regular classrooms in their home schools have been developed in this school district. Many administrators and staff members are unaware of these procedures. Clear remediation of this problem is recommended. Stainback and Stainback (1989) suggest that in order to ensure the success of inclusive schooling, it is essential that the school board and administration adopt a philosophy about inclusion. School leaders must establish clear statements and guidelines outlining an action plan for inclusive schooling. These should be provided to each school in the district. Thousand and Villa (1990) identify formal leadership personnel of a

school district as responsible for publicly representing the school district's mission and coordinating the components necessary for preparing school personnel and students to participate in this mission.

Additional Application

In order to successfully develop constructive strategies for including all children into one unified system of education, work must be done to diligently evoke a spirit of enthusiasm and dedication to a common goal. Establishing the vision of inclusion is essential, but must be accompanied by sound methods to support those who are expected to derive understanding and consensus regarding that vision.

Educating school staff is essential in promoting a consensus about inclusion. School district leaders must develop inservices which not only expound on the philosophy and merits of inclusion but provide opportunities for comprehensive training, which assists in acquiring the necessary language base and technical skills to competently exercise inclusionary practices. Curwin (1992) emphasizes that providing inservices for teachers, administrators parents and paraprofessionals may offer inspiration and hope for the future, but if specific training for the acquisition of new skills is not a part of the process the spiritual element is lost.

Developing good collaborative teaming skills is essential

in successfully including students with extensive challenges into the regular classroom. We must not exclude any person who influences the process. Teachers, parents, fellow students, related service staff, custodians, secretaries and the inclusion student should be part of the team. This has historically been difficult. Assuming that participants intuitively have the skills to effectively work together is short sighted. Treating children in isolation has been the norm and still seems to be the favored delivery system, making communication and accountability more difficult.

It would be refreshing to see more principals participating fully in seminars, work shops and training sessions. The principal sets the climate of the school. Curwin (1992) emphasizes the importance of trust between faculty and administration. Freedom must be given to discard stereotypical roles of team members, so that all feel comfortable in problem solving and confronting new situations. Too often I have felt that administrators have either dominated meetings or refrained from participating. I question the effectiveness of administrators, supervisors or anyone in the collaborative process if they have not participated along with other members in all in-service training. They, like everyone else, need to learn their role in the process. Videos and other options should be used to model effective collaborative team members interacting with one another. By involving themselves in the programs and

methods being mandated by the district, administrators would in all probability offer more adequate leadership.

Effective members of the school community should be encouraged to serve as facilitators in presenting inservices. Acknowledging successful practices among students and staff rewards positive interactions and provides incentives for all to cooperate and should be encouraged. Building on our successes lays a positive foundation for future innovative educational practices.

All members of the school community must be required to attend inservices, therefore, it would be advisable to present seminars and training sessions during regular school hours with substitutes provided for teaching staff.

A general workshop should be provided for paraprofessionals throughout the school district prior to the reconvening of school each fall. Manuals containing methods and procedures should be distributed. Also contained in these packages should be information pertinent to the handicapping conditions of the children which these paraprofessionals are to serve.

Inservices led by experienced paraprofessionals, therapists, teachers, parents, students and other related staff should be organized to demonstrate proper procedures for lifting, feeding, communicating, etc., with the students they have been hired to serve. Attendance should be mandatory. Participants should be paid. Inservices should be video taped

so that personnel joining the team during the course of the school year have a solid foundation on which to build their knowledge.

Measures for monitoring the delivery of service for students should be explored. All too often teachers have voiced concerns about schedules and classrooms being disrupted as well as recommendations being ignored by various staff members. Providing times for therapists, administrators and other related staff to assume periodic classroom leadership roles would afford them opportunities to take ownership in the inclusive process, empower them to help program for change in the future and hopefully help remediate the concerns regarding accountability.

Dissemination of Date and Recommendations

In assessing the results of the interventions it was clear that the majority of those surveyed in this study felt unprepared for inclusion. All members of our educational system need to, at the very least, be exposed to the new philosophy of a unified educational system. Our public schools reflect the preparatory divisions which exist in our colleges and universities. Today's teachers continue to be educated in programs which are separated into specific categories. General and special educators are historically divided, giving each sector few opportunities to observe adults collaborating across their disciplines. If teachers

are expected to be effective in educating all students in one unified system, then college and university officials of both regular and special education departments must join forces to create a unified curriculum for future educators and administrators. These higher institutions of learning must also offer graduate level training to retrain teachers to be adept in service in inclusionary public schools. Appendix J shows a suggested common professional core of courses for all educators. Higher institutions of learning should be encouraged to offer graduate level courses at area public schools.

The addition of an inclusion facilitator to collaborative teams is highly recommended. This person would be in a position to oversee that effective documentation was completed, suggested strategies were being implemented and adequate support systems were in place. Curriculum adaptions would be handled by the facilitator. Currently, these responsibilities are being handled by itinerant teachers who are assigned to several schools, making collaboration and consistency in the delivery of services virtually impossible.

Also worth exploring is an alternative strategy for therapeutic services. I strongly advise a change to a more consultative role for therapists. Under the direction of the therapists, in house staff would implement carefully designed programs which would occur during the natural course of the day and would include fellow classmates, when appropriate.

Teacher attitudes clearly dictate the success or failure of inclusion. Seasoned teachers adamantly opposed to having a child with unique needs in their classroom should be given the option of moving to alternative placements to honor the terms of their contract. New teachers should be clearly informed that inclusion might be practiced in their classrooms. By including such information in their contract, efforts can be made early on to prepare for the future. Potential for success is greater if all the participants are willing to cooperate and believe in the process.

Consideration should also be given to requiring those serving as itinerant teachers to be multi-certified, which would allow them to spend more time in one setting by serving children with a variety of eligibilities. Results of this strategy would offer more support to tne collaborative team and continuity to the programming of all children.

Our educational system, if it is to truly adopt the philosophy of inclusion, needs a drastic paradigm shift. To make this shift, intensive staff development must be employed, methods of accountability must be instituted, clearly stated procedures must be outlined and job descriptions must be provided.

The initial focus of the interventions was to make the process of transitioning and programming for inclusion students more successful by providing more documentation and support for the individuals involved. While the intention was

admirable, the strategy was inept. It became very evident that one person cannot take the sole responsibility for implementing such a change. Each participant has to be empowered to participate and people charged with a job must be given the decision making authority needed to do that job.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions for Interview with Director of Student Services Rockford School District 205

1. What is the definition of inclusion according to this school district?

2. What is the current status of our special ed programs?
   a. inclusion students
   b. totally segregated facilities
   c. resource
   d. self-contained

3. When did you join this school district?

4. Please describe the changes that have taken place in programming for special education while you have been in the district.

5. When did inclusion really begin in this city and what steps were taken to get to this point?

6. Do we have a clearly established policy on inclusion?

7. How do we pay for inclusion? (i.e., therapy, accessibility, staff development)

8. Do regular educators have the right to refuse an inclusion student?

9. What happens if participants decide that inclusion isn't working?

10. How have educators reacted?

11. How have parents reacted?

12. Tell us about the numbers and socio-economic background of inclusion students.

13. How do you decide which teacher gets an inclusion student?

Appendix B

Teacher Questionnaire

1. How would you rate this district's preparation for inclusion students?

1	2	3	4
poor	adequate	good	excellent

2. How qualified do you think you are to teach students with special needs?

1	2	3	4
not at all	somewhat qualified	qualified	very qualified

3. Mentally impaired students belong in regular education classes...

1	2	3	4
never	very seldom	for most activities	for all activities

4. Curriculum adaptions should be the classroom teacher's job.

1	2	3	4
never	sometimes	frequently	always

5. Inclusion students have what effect on regular education classes?

1	2	3	4
negative effect	somewhat negative	no effect	positive effect

6. Inclusion of physically disabled students into regular education classes in home schools will...

1	2	3	4
never work	rarely work	sometimes work	work

7. How would your rate current forms of assessment for students with special needs?

1	2	3	4
poor	adequate	good	excellent

8. How much time are you willing to devote to an inclusion student?

1	2	3	4
none	very little	moderate amount	a lot

9. Support services are provided on a regularly scheduled basis for the student with special needs.

1	2	3	4
never	rarely	somewhat	consistently

10. I enjoy teaching .....

1	2	3	4
rarely	sometimes	most of the time	always

Please write down the first thought that comes to your mind about inclusion.

years teaching_____ highest degree attained_____

regular ed._____special ed._____

I currently have an inclusion student. yes no

I have had an inclusion student. yes no

Appendix C.

Letters to Parents

March 8, 1993

Dear Parents,

Our school district is making a concerted effort to encourage all students in the program for the physically handicapped to attend their home schools next year. This would in no way diminish their programming. All services would be provided at the home school.

This practice of inclusion is designed to provide a more natural environment for the youngsters included. The children attend schools with their neighborhood friends and parents visits and contacts are more convenient.

We really want to know how you feel about inclusion. I will be calling you soon to discuss this. If for some reason, you have not heard from me, please contact me at school. The number is .

Sincerely,

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Team meeting 1/07/93

Appendix D.

FORM A--NEEDS AND TEAM MEMBERS

Identified Team Members for Inclusionary Meetings

Needs:
- Appropriate seating - emphasis on good posture
- Slant board to elevate work
- Mat for prone position
- prone stander - (She'll probably only be able to tolerate a few minutes initially and then will work up to one hour) ⊕ This applies to post surgery period
- Adaptive potty chair
- Keyboarding

Eligibilities: Present
- Adaptive PE.
- OT
- PT
- Speech and Language
- Counseling
- Lift bus
- Paraprofessional
- PH

Absent: Father

Identified Team Members:
- - Next kid
- father
- - O.T.
- P.T. paraprofessional

Counseling -
Paraprofessional -
Teacher -
PH itinerant -
Nurse -
principal -
Support Staffer -

Although has a speech and language eligibility, she is and has been seen on a consultative basis.

Classroom concerns - fatigue
- posture / vision
- reaction to criticism
- need for perfection

91

Strengths -
- Strong academics
- Vocabulary - willingness to express
- Class participation

NOTECONF

Appendix E.

Date: _____

Dear _____: Re: _____

Date of Birth: _____

School: _____

In order to discuss the educational needs of your child, you are invited to attend a conference at _____ scheduled for _____.
(Location) (Date and Time)

The purpose of this meeting is to: (Check all that apply or may apply.)

- ☐ Review your child's recent initial case study evaluation or reevaluation and determine eligibility for special education and related services (MDC).
- ☐ Develop your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and educational placement, if appropriate.
- ☐ Review your child's eligibility and needs for special education and related services (MDC)
- ☐ Review your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) progress and determine future IEP and educational placement needs.
- ☐ Other _____

The individuals who are being invited to attend the meeting are:

Name/Title	Name/Title
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

We highly encourage you to participate in this meeting. You have the right to bring other individuals at your discretion. If you plan to bring other individuals, you are urged to notify me before the meeting so that arrangements can be made to accommodate all participants. Please let me know if you require an interpreter or translator. If you are unable to attend at the proposed time, but would be able to participate if the conference were rescheduled or conducted by phone, please contact me so this can be mutually arranged.

Please review your rights included with this letter. If you have any questions, require an interpreter or translator, or would be able to participate if the conference were rearranged, please contact me by _____
(Date)

_____ _____.
(Location) (Phone)

Sincerely,

_____
(Name and Position)

White - Parent/Guardian
Pink - Central Records Office (Psychology if Case Study, Supervisor if Annual Review or other)
Yellow - Special Education Student File (or Regular Education Student File if not Special Education Eligible)

ISBE 34-57 E (1/91) Page 1 of 1 PARENT/GUARDIAN NOTIFICATION OF CONFERENCE

Please sign and return to person named above: Conference Date: _____

_____
(Student Name/Birthdate)

- ☐ I plan to attend the staff conference
- ☐ I am unable to attend at this time. Please contact me for a different time or date.
- ☐ I am requesting the conference be held without my attendance.
  I understand I will receive a summary of what was discussed.

Areas parents would like to see addressed at conference: 92

_____
Parent/Guardian Signature Date

5800929 RIPA (3/91)

PARENT DOMAIN INVENTORY

NAME _____ DATE _____

This form will be used by members of your child's educational team to develop an appropriate school program. As part of this team, you as a parent can help by providing this valuable information. Please return this form to your child's classroom teacher as soon as possible.

Community

1. Please let us know where your child goes in the community and with whom. Please be specific on the names and locations of the places. Use back of form if needed.

With whom: I = Independently P = Parents F = Family Members FR = Friends

Restaurants		With Whom?	Recreation and Leisure (sports, school events, fairs, swimming, libraries, etc.)		With Whom?
Name	Location		Name	Location	

Grocery Stores		With Whom?	Clothing and Department Stores		With Whom?
Name	Location		Name	Location	

2. Is there is a particular bank which your family uses? (Please specify)

_____

3. What places would you like your child to go?

4. What type of transportation does your child use?

_____Car _____Walks with someone _____Walks alone _____Bicycle

_____Public transportation _____Other (please describe) _____

5. When in these places, does your child pay for items and/or services by himself/herself?

_____Yes _____No

6. When in a restaurant, does your child order for himself/herself?

_____Yes _____No

7. When in a store, does your child ask questions of the people who work there?

_____Yes _____No

Domestic

8. In the following areas, which skills can your child do by himself/herself?

Self care and grooming: _____

_____

_____

Dressing: _____

_____

_____

Housekeeping: _____

_____

_____

Cooking and kitchen cleanup: _____

_____

_____

Laundry: _____

_____

_____

9. At home, does your child use anything to help him/her do any of the above? These might include labels, checklists or schedules. If so, please describe.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Recreation and Leisure

10. How does your child spend his/her free time?

____Mostly alone ____Mostly with others

11. Please list the things s/he does during free time.

card games _____

board games _____

other activities _____

Vocational

12. Please list your child's regular household jobs.

_____

13. Please answer the following if your child is in high school or will be going to the high school next year.

For parents of 14-21 year-olds: Where are you planning to have your child live when s/he leaves school?

_____

For parents of 14-17 year-olds: What kind of job would you like to see your son or daughter have next year?

_____

For parents of 18-21 year-olds: What kind of job would you like to see your son or daughter have when s/he leaves school?

_____

14. Are there any specific reading, writing, language or math skills you would want you child to work more on during the next school year?

_____

Medical

15. Are there any medical or physical concerns that you have for your child?

_____

Social

16. Are there any social concerns that you have for your child?

17. Do you have concerns about your child's communication?

Expectations

18. Considering all of the above, what are your dreams, goals and expectations for your child?

For the next school year:

For the next level in schoool:

For after s/he graduates:

19. If you have any questions about your child's current school program, please write them below.

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Routine Chart for _____ School _____

Grade/Class _____ Date _____

Time & Activity	Individualization	Support	IEP Goals

Name of Student: _____ Outcomes: _____

Class: _____ Grade: _____

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Class Outcome					
Student Outcome					
Learner Style					
Type of Service					
Staff Responsible					
Assignment					
Assessment					

Appendix H

Teachers' responses to being asked
to write down the first thought that came to
mind about inclusion

No reason for it

Need to know special needs.

If a child benefits-great! If he just sits-help?!?

Should inclusion be nation wide?

How will the child adapt and be accepted by the class?

Child self esteem suffers.

Adjusting

We need to be more prepared and supported.

Who's going to help?

It could work.

Extra planning

Not enough help-need more preparation

Extra work

It is a big challenge to teachers.

There should be no extra expectations on regular education teachers without adequate inservice.

more work

Enriching to all

Appendix I

Reflections of Itinerant Teachers

1. Adaptions and programming were not being executed as per IEP objectives and goals.

2. Meetings were being called by principals concerning their students' programming without the case manager's knowledge.

3. Their input was repeatedly omitted or pre-empted by building personnel.

4. There were expected to "fix" all problems.

5. They were constantly asked to justify their jobs and the students' placements in the program.

6. Expectations were unrealistic. Time constraints made it virtually impossible to train paraprofessionals, deliver equipment, adapt materials, and document activities at the same time.

7. Extra duties were frequently expected of them. They were often asked to take on extra tasks when fellow peers were absent, etc.

8. They were expected to fulfill the responsibilities of an inclusion facilitator as well as perform their own jobs at several buildings.

9. Teachers frequently omitted students from activities, leaving them with paraprofessionals, etc.

10. Teachers asked what they should do with special needs students while the rest of the class was on a field trip.

Common Professional Core of Courses For All Educators

Courses	Credit Hours
1. Historical/Philosophical Foundations of Education	3
2. Child and Adolescent Development	3
3. Human Relations and Sensitivity to Human Differences	3
4. Classroom Organization, Management, and Motivational Strategies	3
5. Curriculum Design and Adaptations	3
6. Educational Measurement and Curricular-Based Assessment	3
7. Adapting Instruction to Individual Differences	3
8. Utilization of Audiovisual/Media/Computer Technology	3
9. Home, School, and Community Relations	3
10. Issues and Trends in Education	3
Total	30

Source: From S. Stainback & W. Stainback, 1989, "Facilitating Merger Through Personnel Preparation" in *Educating All Students in the Mainstream of Regular Education*, S. Stainback, W. Stainback, & M. Forest (Eds.), (Baltimore, Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company). Reprinted by permission.